

Dear Mr. President:

I feel I must communicate with you again about the imminent and threatening shortage of physicians, dentists, and other personnel who must be available to meet the health needs of our expanding population. You will no doubt recall my letters to you on this subject dated July 27 and September 12, 1959, and your reply dated August 11 and an acknowledgment from Mr. Gerald D. Morgan on September 22 last year.

In your August 11 letter, you referred to a study of health manpower needs being carried out by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. You indicated that if the study demonstrated a need for Federal action, you would recommend such action to the Congress.

The study to which you referred was completed last October. In a summary report entitled Physicians for a Growing America, it confirms and extends every fact I presented in my letters to you. It points out:

..... That we will need a 50 percent increase in the number of graduating physicians if we are to maintain the present ratio of physicians to population.

..... That this increased output of physicians will require expansion of present schools and the establishment of new schools.

..... That since it takes about 11 years to plan a new school, construct it, staff it, and carry it forward to its first graduating class, steps must be taken now if the threatened shortage is to be averted.

..... That as one partial answer to this issue, Federal support should be given to the construction of medical school facilities.

..... That "medical school facilities" means expanding and improving existing medical schools, constructing new schools of basic medical sciences, constructing new 4-year medical schools, and constructing the necessary teaching hospitals.

..... That there is the same urgency in terms of increasing the number of graduating dentists in the years immediately ahead.

..... That increasing the supply of physicians and dentists is "a national health problem, a need of the whole people. The provision of the needed support is without question a national responsibility."

I do not know, Mr. President, how there could be a more clear-cut case than that for Federal action that will give leadership and stimulus to State and local action, both public and private.

Yet I have looked in vain, as this 2nd Session of the 86th has reconvened, for any legislative or fiscal proposal by the Administration that makes even one small step toward meeting this challenge.

I have noted the single sentence on Page 63 of your Economic Report that reads: "The assurance of an adequate supply of doctors and other health personnel will require an expansion of medical training facilities." But I also note that your 1961 budget contains cuts in the funds requested for the two existing programs that assist in the construction of the hospital and the research aspects of the medical schools and related institutions.

I do not suggest that construction programs, financed in part by the Federal government, will meet the total need. I am equally concerned, for example, with the fact that on the average the applicants for admission to medical and related schools are declining in number and deteriorating in quality. There are many aspects of this problem that the Federal government cannot become involved in under our present concepts of its proper relationships to nonfederal institutions and agencies. We can

and should, however, remove a part of the economic barrier which keeps talented and interested young people from seriously considering medical and related careers. And I propose within a few days to introduce legislation which will authorize an annual appropriation of \$10 million to provide scholarships for students in schools of medicine, dentistry, and osteopathy. Under my proposal, which calls for matching funds from the States, some 8000 students -- selected by State commissions on the basis of ability and need -- would receive scholarships each year. Only with such help and incentive, it seems to me, can many young men and women from families in the middle and low income groups even consider the lengthy and expensive training process involved in medical and dental education. It is my hope that this bill will be supported by the Administration.

Last year, Mr. President, I introduced legislation -- H.R. 6906 -- broadening the present Public Health Service program of matching grants for construction of research facilities to include teaching facilities. My bill calls for \$50 million a year for five years for the expansion and improvement of existing schools of medicine, dentistry, and public health; a total of \$100 million over a 10-year period for the construction of new schools in these fields; and a slightly more favorable matching provision for new schools or for projects that will demonstrably expand the enrollment of existing schools.

Although this bill of mine is similar in principle to legislation introduced by the Administration two years ago (but not, curiously enough, re-introduced in the 86th Congress), I have not been able to get Executive

Branch interest or support for my bill. I simply cannot understand why, since it is so clearly within the general policy lines laid down by the Administration and since the need for such legislation has been stressed repeatedly by competent authorities within and outside of government for the past several years.

I call upon you, Mr. President, to use the power and prestige of your office to help put an end to further delays in what should be and must be affirmative action now to assure an adequate number of well trained physicians and dentists for the years ahead.

The practice of medicine is becoming more complex and more specialized. There is no reason to believe that one doctor in 1975 will be able to take care of more patients in 1975 than he can today. The number of people in the U. S. population continues to spiral upward. The largest proportionate increases are the age groups under 12 and over 65 -- the groups that have the greatest need for health services. But nothing is being done to face up to this problem, despite the fact that it is well within our capacities as a Nation to do so without either placing a strain on our economy or interfering with established patterns of cooperation among public and private groups and agencies.

Everything we do as a Nation and as a member of a community of nations is important, Mr. President. One of our first and paramount responsibilities, however, is to assure the health and well-being of our people. If we do not have good health, we are weak. An adequate number of well-trained physicians and other health personnel is essential to our

good health. We will not have enough doctors to assure our good health unless we act now. It is as simple as that.

It is my hope that the Congress and the Executive Branch can act as one in this matter about which there can be no fundamental disagreement.

Sincerely,

John E. Fogarty, M. C.